

# Lover's Canyon Project

## Snag Distribution Analysis

To address the abundance and distribution of snag habitat across the Lover's Canyon Project Area, the following analysis was conducted:

- Analysis of suitable Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) suitable habitat nesting, roosting and foraging habitat in the analysis area as described in the Lover's Canyon Wildlife Specialist's Report.
- Field reviews to conduct snag abundance estimations in suitable NSO habitat within the analysis area.

### Analysis of NSO suitable habitat as described in the Environmental Assessment and Wildlife Resource Report.

The Lover's Canyon Wildlife Resource Report states that the analysis area provides 4,249 acres of nesting/roosting, 10,496 acres of foraging habitat, and 283 acres of post-fire foraging suitable habitat for a total of 15,028 acres of suitable habitat for NSO. This habitat is abundant well-distributed with snags. The treated areas of the project will retain snags at Forest Standard and Guideline minimum levels of two to five snags per acre. In addition the remaining un-harvested areas will retain an abundance of snag habitat.

### Field Review of Snag Distribution.

On June 22, 2016 a field review of snag distribution was made throughout the project area. This occurred along roads 44N44, 44N45, 44N41, and 43N19 in the project. These roads were selected to represent an elevational cross section and a variety of aspects throughout the project. This field review consisted of ocular estimates of snag distribution in areas of nesting, roosting and foraging habitat.

Snags in the project area are abundant and well-distributed. In most areas of older forest habitat snags are above Forest Standard and Guideline minimal levels and are composed of trees greater than 24 inches in diameter at breast height in a spectrum of decay classes. There were observations of pileated woodpecker during project field reviews. This species is an indicator of large snag habitat in late successional condition.

### Conclusion

Based on the results of the project changes in the post-damage assessment of the winter 2017 landslides for the Lover's Canyon area, there is no measurable change in snag distribution. New landslides within the project area total about 29 acres of active features. Approximately 15 acres of these landslides overlap with proposed treatment units. The landslides did not remove or downgrade snag habitat. There is no measurable change in snag habitat (pre-project) from the new landslide activity. The changes proposed in the 15 acres of overlap are less than what was originally analyzed in the project wildlife analysis.

Based on my review of the distribution of NSO habitat as described in the Lover's Canyon Project Wildlife Resource Report and my field review of the project, I conclude that snags are abundant in the forested areas of the project and are well distributed in excess of Forest Plan Forest-wide minimum Standards and Guidelines for snags. Lover's Canyon Project Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 will not have impact on the abundance and distribution of snags in the analysis area.

**Sam Cuenca**

District Wildlife Biologist

Salmon/Scott Ranger District

10/30/2016